A Full and True

RELATION

As well of the

Blowving Up of the Ann FRIGAT

As alſo of the Examination, Tryal, and Condemnation of *John Adams*

THE

GUNNER

Thereunto Belonging:

As the Occaſion of that Accident by His

DEFAULT.

For which he was on the 24th. of this inſtant *DECEMBER*, Sentenced

BY A

Councel of War

To be Hang'd.

With Allowance.

Printed by *A. Purſlow* in the Year, 1673.

A

A scale of the Examination

Thereunto B

A scale Occasion of that

D E F

For which he was

D E F M B

A Full RELATION Of the Blowing Up of the ANN FRIGAT; And of the *Tryal* and *Condemnation* of the GVNNER, &c.

THe *Ann*, one of his Majesties Third-Rate Frigats carrying Sixty Guns, having been out at Sea a Cruising, not unsuccesfully off the Coast of *Holland*, came the last Month into the Dock at *Sherness* to Wash and Tallow, and provide other necessaries, having endured much bad weather, and some damage, being design'd after that Recruit to have kept out all this Winter: For this purpose her Guns and (as it is generally reported by the Ships Crew) all her Powder was taken out of her, and secured on shore. Being

there in short time Refitted, she was brought forth again, and when the dreadful Disaster we are going to relate befel her: *viz.* On the Second Day of *December*, was Riding at Anchor neer *Quinborough Swail*, expecting that very Afternoon, to have her Stores again brought Aboard. During this time many of the Seamen that had belong'd to her a considerable time, were allowed to go on shore, but the Prest-men and other new comers were kept on Board; where that morning about Nine a Clock they were Muster'd, and after Dinner all hands apply themselves with Diligence to get their Ship Rigged, looking every hour for their Stores coming in, for which the Gunner was gone, and the Captain and most of the Officers gone a shore, except Mr. *Agres* the Purser, whose Wife was now unhapily come on board, with an intent only to visit, but as it proved in the fatal Event, to dye with her Husband; upon which little-thought of Errand several other women were also led thither by their own ill Destinies, amongst whom some had brought their Children too, as if Fate had thought a Sacrifice of the strength of Men, and beauty of Women not enough, without adding the Inocence of Babes to compleat the Tragedy.

Stop here good Reader! and think it no Digression to consider a little seriously what a bubble is Humane-Life! How silent are the approaches of Death? how unforeseen the Trap-doors of the Grave? Man that in pride of Health will needs now and then bluster as if he could pluck down Stars, or throw the world off from its poles, what is he still but a little brittle Clay? kneaded at first with Tears, and then hardned by the Sun-shine of Prosperity, into a lump of vanity, which yet a Feavers Fire can scorch into dust, a shower of Rhume wash away into durt, or a blast, in a moment scatter into irrecoverable Atoms.

Here might you have seen almost two hundred Souls, thinking of nothing less than their impending Fate, and in-

deed

deed in the eye of Humane Reason they were safe, being in Health, on board a good Ship, no Enemy neer, no Tempest, no Powder neither as they poor souls imagined, to hurt them: But alas! here they mistake, and Death in a private corner lays his Ambuscade; for about two a clock that Afternoon, as the Joyners (several being come from *Sherness*) were busie at their work neer the powder-room, and all the rest aboard imployed, some managing and preparing the Tackle, other walking on the Decks, some merry with their Friends, and others securely snoaring out their last breath in their Hammocks, behold! in an instant, sudden as a flash of Lightning, or the springing of a Thought, comes a dreadful blast that blows up all before it, and rends not only this Ship, but a Fire-ship that lay neer her, to pieces, Heaven is eclipsed with an ascending cloud of Sulpher, and the bodies of men, women, and children promiscuously hurl'd with a furious impetuosity aloft into the Air, some having their brains beaten out, with, or against the shattered pieces of the Masts and Decks, others disanimated with the violence of the motion, or drowned at their fall. In brief, in the twinkling of an eye, there appear'd such a Scene of Destruction, and spectacle of Horror as would puzle the ablest Orator to express it fully; nor indeed do we delight to agravate that Affliction in the Readers breast which all good Natures out of a generous compassion, will be sufficiently sencible of on such deplorable occasions: 'Tis too sad a truth, that one hundred and thirty odd persons of the Ships Crew, six Women, four or five Children, about eight Joyners, and four Cawkers then imployed there, were hereby without a moments warning or consideration dispatcht into another world, and only seventeen men, and one woman that were then Aboard saved, of whom the greatest part were wounded or grievously hurt, but escaped through infinite mercy with their Lives, being quickly taken up by the charitable assistance of some Boats from Ships that lay neer.

To

To tell the manner how the Powder took fire, is more we conceive than can certainly be done by any, but it is thought ſome of the Workmen not imagining any Powder to be aboard at all, might be leſs careful then otherwiſe, and ſo contributed to their own deſtruction; For what ill end it lay there unhappily concealed may be gathered from the Sequel: For ſoon after the Confuſion of the Blow was over, the Officers coming together concluded to take into Cuſtody both the *Gunner* of the *Ann*, and of the Fireſhip that periſhed with her: But the *Latter* giving a very ſatisfactory account of his *Innocence*, was ſoon diſcharged of his Confinement: But the former could not ſo handſomly clear himſelf, and therefore was continued under a Guard, and after ſome time ſent up to the *Marſhalſes*, in Order to receiving his Tryal at a Councel of War.

Accordingly on *Munday* the 22. of this inſtant *December* a Councel of War was held on board one of his Majeſties Yatches, lying over-againſt *Towerwharf*, where amongſt other things this buſineſs was Examined, and the Priſoner charged with imbezelling his Majeſties Stores committed to his Charge: and that by Concealing this Powder (which he deſign'd to have diſpoſed of to his own advantage) he had been the Occaſion of deſtroying ſo many of his Majeſties brave Subjects, and of the loſs of the Ship; but deſiring to Examine ſome other Witneſſes for clearing the matter, they Ordered him to be brought again on the *Wedneſday* following.

On which day the Judge Advocate and Councel of War ſiting in the place aforeſaid, the Priſoner was again brought aboard, and upon a full Examination it was proved by Two Witneſſes that he ordered them to lay in Sixteen Barrels of Powder in a private unuſual place, to be concealed, which he intended ſecretly to have got out and ſold; and this was the quantity of Powder which gave the Fatal Blow: Beſides; another gave Evidence that a

Hundred

Hundred and Forty Barrels of Powder were delivered out of the Ship, whereas he had placed only One Hundred and Thirty Barrels to Account, so that it was evident he had slighly designed at least the converting of no less then Twenty six Barrels of Powder to his own use, and was thereby the unhappy Cause (by Accident) of all this miserable disaster: whereupon the Councel finding him Guilty, the Honourable Judge Advocate proceeded to give Sentence against him, *That for such his Offence he should be Hanged.*

This Thunderbolt leveld against his life, he received with a becoming subjection, yet with a Courage that might cast blushes on the Gallantry of a dying *Roman*; and though all Spectators could not but Applaud the discreet proceedings and justice of the Councel of War, yet at the same time they no less heartily Commiserated the Prisoners unhappy Fate; many that Abominated his Offence, haveing a love for the man, who was indeed a person before reputed honest, and of a quiet, industrious, obligeing Temper, quallities that much recommended him to the Affections of all the Common Seamen concerned with him: besides, what added much to the Scale of Compassion, he had a disconsolate Wife, and Four or Five small Children to leave behind him: But we see how far that cursed desire of Money prevails even upon the best Natures, so as to prompt them for the smallest advantage, to prostitute their Honesty, Honour, Conscience and all, and venture on the most Nefarious Crimes, *Fellonies, Burglaries*; and other too common violations of Law, though Heinous and Insufferable in themselves, are yet but *Private* Injuries, and Damnifie only some particular persons, but Embeseling or Purloyning the *Stores* or *Munitions* of War, especially in such a juncture (besides the Horrid Ingratitude of abusing his *Majesties* Gracious Trust) is a kind of *Civil Sacriledge*, and of a more

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miſcheivous conſequence in Relation to the *publique*, than any thing elſe (almoſt) in the whole Catalogue of Villany; If there be yet *Any* (as for the Honour of our Country we moſt paſſionately wiſh ſhe may never be guilty of producing one of that viperous brood) who Traiterouſly prefer their own *Private Lucre* and *Emolument* before the Honour, Safety, and Advantage of their *King* and Country, who ſhall endeavour to miſdiſpoſe publique proviſions, or by mixing the Duſt of Sea-coals with their Powder render it more weak, and leſs effectual, to the unſpeakable abuſe of his Majeſty, and prejudice of his Service againſt his Enemies, or that uſe any ſuch or the like helliſh cheating devices. Oh! may they with Confuſion behold their errors timely diſcovered by the prudent vigilancy of our Superiors, and as they have lived without any true Honour, be proceeded againſt without mercy, and dye without Pitty.

FINIS